PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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1. Policy statement

At Holy Cross Preparatory School we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

2. Scope

This policy is intended to:

-Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school

-Inform pupils and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with:

SEND policy

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Safeguarding policy

3. Policy aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

4. Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

The Equality Act 2010

The Data Protection Act 2018

Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

5. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

-Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)- Mrs. Claire Copeland

-Headteacher and DDSL- Mrs. Sarah Hair

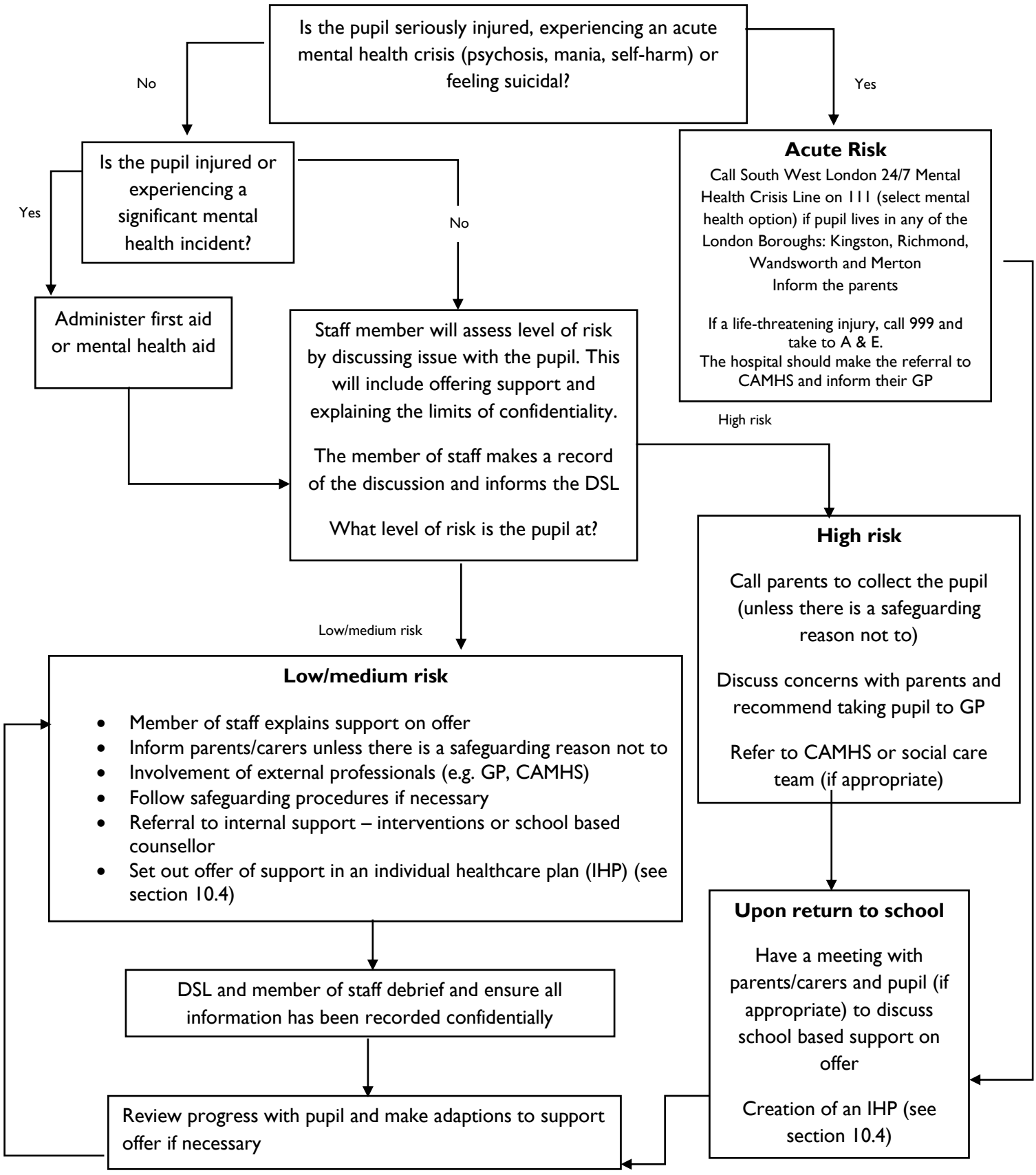
-Deputy Headteacher and DDSL- Miss Catherine Green

-Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO)- Ms Salomé Humanes

-Head of Juniors- Mrs. Kelly Lanigan

-Head of Pre-Prep- Mrs Magdalena Fernandes

6. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



7. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

8. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file and on CPOMS.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

-The full name of the member of staff who is making the record

-The full name of the pupil(s) involved

-The date, time and location of the disclosure

-The context in which the disclosure was made

-Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

9. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

-Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing

-The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school

-Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

-Who they will share the information with

-What information they will share

-Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

9.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the DSL
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the DSL
6. The DSL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

10. Supporting pupils

10.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, circle time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on the school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through assessments e.g. Pupils Attitudes to Self and School (PASS)
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support through key members of staff

- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
    - 'Things I Wish My Teacher Knew' boxes
    - Circle time

10.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the DSL will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in section 10.1. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

10.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

-Pastoral Support from: Class Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Heads of Department, key senior members of staff and the Assistant Head Pastoral and DSL

-Circle time

-Targeted sessions through the PSHE and RHE curriculums

-Mindfulness sessions- juniors

-Monitor pupils through the Children of Concern list

-Liaising with parents and outside agencies as appropriate

10.4 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

Where staff feel it is necessary, a pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP).

IHPs are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's IHP will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

10.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)
- Local counselling services

11. Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. in the Friday Update)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home through the curriculum maps

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 10.4).

12. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying

- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

13. Signposting

Sources of support are available from the DSL, DDSLs and Senior Leadership Team, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help. They will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

14.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum.

14.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

-Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma

-Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

15. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

-Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are

-Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health

-Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

16. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

-Treat mental health concerns seriously

-Offer staff supervision sessions

-Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves

-Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

17. Monitoring arrangements

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

Last reviewed: October 2026. Next review: October 2029.